THE

Connecticut Evangelical Magazine.

[PUBLISHED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS.]

VOL. VII.] OCTOBER, 1806. [NO. 4.

An Essay, designed for common understandings, on the Moral Inability *of fallen men.*

THAT this should be understood by all, is certainly a matter of great importance. Of this, it concerns the illiterate, as well as learned, the young, as well as those of riper years, to have just conceptions. Line upon line, in divers manners, adapted to different capacities, on this subject, may therefore not be superfluous.

It is very necessary that sinners should be made sensible, not only that they are unable to do what God requires of them; but also why they are unable. Not only that it is impossible for them to fulfil all righteousness; but also what is the cause of this impossibility. Not only that they have not *every* kind of power, perfectly to keep the commandments of God, or truly to comply with the gospel while unregenerate; but also that they have some kind of power, immediately to do both, whether regenerate or not. A misapprehension concerning either of these, may be of fatal consequence.

On the one hand, as long as men imagine that they have every requisite capacity to perform their whole duty, or to do all that must now be done by them, in order to their obtaining pardon and eternal life, they will feel easy, and be apt to neglect a present attention to religion, without much concern. They will not be likely to pray in earnest, or to watch against sin with any anxiety. They will neither see their need of God's working in them, to will or to do, nor the necessity of working out their own salvation with fear and trembling.

To awaken them out of this stupid dream of self-sufficiency, the Saviour of men hath therefore given them such alarming admonitions as these: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God: No man can come to me, except the Father draw him: Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." And, to cut off effectual-

ly from the unregenerate, all hope of obtaining mercy, or of finding grace to help, grounded on the supposed acceptableness of any thing they have done or can ever do till created in Christ Jesus unto good works, an apostle hath declared, "They that are in the flesh, cannot please God."

But then, on the other hand, should any hence conclude and be left to believe, that they have *no* power to please God, or to know and do his will, such an imagination might be equally fatal to them. For, in that view of their case, how could they ever be convinced of sin, or of righteousness? Of sin in themselves, or of righteousness in God? How could they ever see that the ways of the Lord were equal, or that their own ways were unequal? If in fact, men had no kind of capacity, any more than the horse or the mule has, to love and serve God, or to repent and believe the gospel, certainly, enjoining these things upon them could not be reasonable; nor could their not obeying such injunctions be at all criminal.

Accordingly, when our Saviour had told Nichodemus of the necessity of a man's being born from above, born of the Spirit, before he could see the kingdom of God, or believe to the saving of the soul, and yet had told him that for not so doing and believing a man was condemned already, he presently clears up the matter, and removes the apparent inconsistency, by adding; "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." In like manner, when the apostle Paul says, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God," he had previously said why they cannot: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God."

For these reasons, and from such texts as these, divines have been led to state, and endeavour to explain, a distinction of two kinds of inability in mankind, essentially different. One, they have called a *natural* inability; because it consists in the want of natural powers, talents, or advantages: the other, a *moral* inability because it is owing only to moral depravity.

Such is the deficiency of language, that many words are ambiguous; being used in different senses, on different occasions. This is the case respecting one of the epithets made use of to denote the qualities of these two kinds of ability. The word natural, has several acceptations. Sometimes it signifies *native*. By the natural man, is meant, man in his native state. Whence some may have concluded, that whatever inability one brings into the world with him, must be a natural inability. This, however, is not our sense of the phrase on the present subject. The inability which we call moral, it is supposed may be in man, and is so, from his nativity. We suppose the children of men are born morally depraved. It was the penitent confession of David, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." And the reason given by Christ, why we must be the subject of a second birth, was this, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh."

Again, since natural refers to nature, being the adjective from

it, some may think, and some have thought, that any inability which belongs to man's nature, must be a natural inability. But neither is this our meaning, in the present distinction. The inability which we here call moral, is supposed to be seated in the nature of a sinner. Nor is this thought to be using words, at all out of their ordinary signification. Nothing is more common than to confess the *sin* of our *nature*. Nothing is more common than to speak of *corrupt natures* by which, I conceive, nature *morally* corrupt, or sinful, is very universally meant. And when a sinner is renewed in the spirit of his mind; when the stony heart is taken out of his flesh, and a heart of flesh is given him; when he is created after God, in righteousness and true holiness, is there not in him evidently a change of nature? And yet, is not this evidently a moral change?

I am sensible, indeed, however wonderful it may seem, both these questions have been answered in the negative. Some deny that there is any change of nature, in regeneration; because they do not believe the nature of man is so depraved, as to need such a renovation. Others deny it, because, according to their philosophy, man has no nature to be changed. And indeed, when we come down to first principles, or self-evident propositions, men may deny or affirm any thing. They may say man is no more than a chain of ideas, volitions and exercises, without any internal cause; like the tail of a comet, should the comet itself be annihilated, or never have existed. They may assert that men have no permanent character; and can have no accountability. That every good thought is perfect holiness; and that every evil motion, is total depravity. They may affirm that evil actions done, will go away into everlasting punishment; and good actions only, into life eternal; the agents remaining as they were, in non-entity. With men who will admit no principles, nothing in nature, it is impossible to dispute.

But, among those who are not so entirely out of the reach of argumentation: among those who are not gone quite beyond the utmost verge of all created nature: among those who allow and maintain, that there is a spirit in man, a heart, a nature, and those who hold, that this spirit, this heart, this nature, is so totally depraved as to need a radical renovation, several have denied that this can be altogether, if at all, a change of the moral kind. Some very good old divines, have insisted that regeneration must be a *physical work*. This they have advanced, fearing otherwise the Arminian notion would follow, of its being effected by moral suasion. But this, it appears to me, was a groundless apprehension. Is the Almighty in need of the help of instruments and second causes, in all his operations, as men are in theirs? Cannot the Creator of the ends of the earth quicken souls dead in sin, or create men unto good works, without the power, or proper influence, of any means, physical or moral? This great change is effected, I conceive, in a supernatural manner; by the power of God *immediately*.

That regeneration is not a change altogether of the moral kind, has been concluded, however, from the effect itself; if not from the necessary manner of its production. If a change of nature in the subject be supposed, we have been told, "It must be admitted, that so far it is physical: for moral quality is predicable of the will and affections only, and not of that state of the soul which is the ground of them." But why should this be said? In nature, can there be nothing of a moral nature? Can there be no difference of quality, between the nature of moral agents, and the nature of soils, or of vegetables, or of irrational animals? Does not the nature of God, comprehend his moral perfections? Are not the holiness, the impartial justice, and mercifulness of the divine nature, moral excellencies. Is not God to be adored and loved for these, as well as for his holy counsels, for his righteous judgments, and for his works of grace and mercy? The psalmist thought so, it seems, when he said to him, "Thou *art* good, and *doest* good." And when he said of him, "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment." And is there no moral quality in the disposition of a man? Is there no holiness in the heart that is upright; and universally benevolent? In a heart fully set in one to do evil, is there no sin? In being *good-natured*, can there be nothing virtuous? In being *ill-natured*, is there nothing vicious? Our Saviour certainly uses expressions very similar to the word nature, when, to illustrate the impossibility of a man's acting contrary to his disposition, he says, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." And when he tells us, in language less figurative; "A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things."

According to scripture, and common speech, and common sense, I think we are warranted in still making the distinction between natural and moral inability, as it used to be made. I think we may yet say, natural inability excuses from blame; not admitting, "This must be understood with limitations."

Wise men sometimes, and the weak very often, are led into wrong ideas, on important subjects, by the ambiguity of words. Were it not for this, whether we use them with the greatest propriety or not, provided we duly guard against acceptations not intended, and well define our meaning, it might be sufficient. By moral inability is meant, that inability which proceeds from an evil heart, or from the want of a good disposition: By natural inability, that which may be owing to any thing else. In other words, natural inability is the not having a price in one's hand, to get wisdom or do good: Moral inability is the having no heart, to improve such a price. When a man cannot know a thing, or cannot do a thing, merely because he has not an honest and good heart, his inability is of the moral kind. When one cannot know or do a thing, though his heart be perfectly honest

and good, he labors under a natural inability.

If any will say; after all, this is a distinction of no consequence—Inability is inability. What a man cannot do, he cannot do—Whether it be owing to the want of a heart, or to any other cause it comes to the same thing." True; as to a real impossibility of doing, what one is unable to do, it *does* come to the same thing: but as to excusing, it does *not* come to the same thing. If a bad disposition were a good excuse, and no moral evil, all the wickedness in the universe would be perfectly excusable. Because sin cannot be holiness, is it no more sin? Because a sinner cannot, at the same time, be a saint, is he no more a sinner? Or, because an evil-minded man cannot get rid of his evil mind, while he has no such inclination, is he only to be pitied, like one who labors under an obstinate catarrh, or an incurable consumption!

The design of a state of probation, and of all the trials of men, is to discover what is in their *heart*. When sin is discovered there, let it cleave to the bottom and all the sides of it ever so fast, and let it be ever so impossible for them to extract it, while they will not let it go, God will condemn them; and they have all the reason in the world to condemn themselves.

True, for affording any relief to one dead in sin, or any information how, by his own efforts, he can become alive to God, this is a distinction of no consequence. On the contrary, it leaves him sensibly, much worse than it found him. It found him saying, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;" it leaves him, knowing that he is "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked." He was alive without it, but when it comes fairly into his view, sin revives, and he dies. It prophesies no good concerning him, but evil, no wonder therefore that he hates it, as Ahab did Micaiah.

But, for vindicating the justice of God, and magnifying his grace; for lowering down the loftiness of man, and laying low the haughtiness of men, that the Lord alone may be exalted, it is a distinction of great consequence. Without admitting a material difference, in point of excusing, between a wicked heart, and feeble hands or a weak head; between moral depravity, and any natural impediment, the whole word of God, and all his ways to men, must appear involved in midnight darkness. His requiring absolute perfection, of such imperfect creatures, must seem shockingly unreasonable. His condemning to endless tribulation and anguish, every soul of man that doeth evil, when doing evil is what no soul of man can help, excessively cruel. His unconditional decrees, of election and reprobation, and his having mercy on whom he will have mercy, in effectual calling, arbitrary, partial, and palpably unjust. In such loud murmurings and bitter complaints, every mouth will be open, if all men are not saved. But let men once know the plague of their own heart; let the evident difference between this, and any innocent weakness of body or mind, be properly seen and felt, every mouth must be stopped,

and all the world be consciously guilty before God. All the formidable objections against his decrees, against his laws, and against the gospel of his grace, will instantly vanish. Why then should this be thought an unimportant distinction, by those whose heart's desire it is, that God should be glorified?

And, I may add, why should it be so thought, if we wish that sinners should be saved? For, though it wounds them, and seems altogether against them at the first, it may do them good in the latter end. By driving them out of their refuges of lies, and hiding places of falsehood, it may bring them to see the necessity of fleeing for refuge to the glorious hope set before them in the gospel. By pulling down strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, it may be of essential service, towards bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

To see one's self either without strength, or without excuse, is very mortifying: to see both at once, must be extremely humiliating indeed. But both at once must be seen by a sinner, before either the justice of the divine law, or the grace of the gospel, can possibly be understood. And when these are both seen, a sinner only wants a good heart, to have the light of the knowledge of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, shine unto him, in its ravishing glory. A heart-felt conviction of one's total helplessness, and utter inexcusableness, at the same time, and in the same respects, is therefore the last preparatory step, in order to a sinner's being brought out of darkness, into God's marvellous light, by the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

An attempt to explain several of the principal texts, which are brought forward by those who hold to a Universal Restoration, in support of their system.

(Continued from vol. vi. p. 91.)

No. IV.

"WHEN thy sisters, Sodom, "and her daughters shall re- "turn to their former estate, "and Samaria and her daugh- "ters shall return to their for- "mer estate, then thou and thy "daughters shall return to your "former estate." Ezek. xvi. 55.

THIS chapter is a very figurative and striking description of the aggravated wickedness of the Jews. They are compared to Sodom and Samaria, two very wicked cities, and then are declared to be more corrupt than they. The greater privileges enjoyed by the Jews gave a more crimson dye to their sin. Them only God knew of all the families of the earth. He did much to strengthen their obligation to be his, according to the covenant made between them (see ver. 8.) The Lord declares to them what a helpless state he found them in, what he had done for them, and what unkind returns they had made him.—He then tells them what dreadful judgments they must expect, even to be driven out of their own land. But the God of Abra-

ham does not leave his people without a promise of better days. He promises to bring again their captivity, ver. 53, and in the 55th, ver. he promises that they shall return to their former estate.

The threatening in this chapter had a partial fulfilment in the Babylonish captivity, and the promise had a partial fulfilment in the return from that captivity: but the threatening had a more complete fulfilment in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and in the consequent dispersion of the Jews, which has lasted from the first century to the present time. The promise, contained in this chapter, will be more fully verified in the calling in of the Jews, which is an event to be accomplished in some future period, between this and the end of the world. It is clear from the scriptures, as I conclude, will be granted on all hands, that the Jews as a people are yet to be incorporated into the church of Christ. The passage, which is now in our view, does, among others, prove the restoration of the Jews to the enjoyment of the privileges of the church of God.

This text does not mean, that those Jews, who have died in their dispersions, will be restored to their former estate. It does not mean, that they are going from their graves to Jerusalem, to live there; or from hell to heaven, to live there. We are not to understand a restoration of the *same persons* to their former estate, but a restoration of the *same nation*. A nation is considered as living through all its successive generations.—The Jews, now upon the earth, are the *same nation* they were in the time when Ezekiel's prophecy was delivered, but they are not the *same persons*. As the restoration of Jerusalem to her former estate has no reference to the salvation of those Jews, who have died in their unbelief; so the restoration of Sodom and Samaria has no respect to the restoration of those, who were cut off in their sins and sent to hell. And if this be one of the pillars, on which the Restoration system stands, we are ready to wonder how any can venture their souls upon it.

It is evident, that this text has no strength to support the system of a Restoration from hell torments to the joys of heaven, because it refers to something which is to take place in *this world*. The restoration of the Jews, it is agreed on all hands, is to take place in this world; but it appears from the 53d as well as the 55th verse, that the restoration of Sodom and Samaria is to be *previous* to the restoration of the Jews. "When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, *then* will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them."

Again, it is evident, that the return of Sodom and Samaria is an event, which is to take place in this present world, because upon their return, God promises to give them to Jerusalem, that is to the Jews, for daughters, ver. 61. To give them to the Jews for daughters must mean, that they should be adopted into their church, and have the same place, as though they were the natural seed of Abraham, and so the natural branches of the church.

Is it not reasonable to suppose, that Sodom and Samaria, in this passage, are put for the whole Gentile world, as Edom, Babylon and Egypt are put for all enemies to the church, whether they ever lived in those places or not? This supposition will make the interpretation of this text easy, and it will perfectly coincide with the scripture in general. The Gentiles, which for ages had wallowed in the sins of Sodom and Samaria, and were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, are now brought nigh, and richly partake of the blessing of Abraham. The apostle, in the 11th chapter of his epistle to the church at Rome, compares the church of God to a good olive tree, and shows, that the Jews, for a while, were this olive tree. The conversion of Gentiles, he represents, by taking branches from a wild olive and graffing them into this good olive. The natural descendants of God's covenant people he calls the natural branches of the olive, Rom. xi. 21. The Gentiles which were converted and joined to the church, he considers as unnatural or ingrafted branches; or with another similitude in view, as the adopted seed of Abraham. And is not this precisely the idea communicated in the 61st verse of this 16th chapter of Ezekiel —"And I will give them unto thee for daughters." Cities, when personified, are considered as being of the feminine gender; therefore these cities are said to be given to Jerusalem, i. e. to the Jewish church, for *daughters*. They shall be just as though they were their own children. If ye are Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."

In the passage, which we are attempting to explain, the return of Sodom and Samaria is to precede the return of the Jews, but the return of the Jews is certainly to take place in this world. To this agree the words of the apostle Rom. xi. 25, 26. "Blindness in part has happened to Israel *until* the fulness of the gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved." First the Jews were Christ's olive tree, now the tree is chiefly made up of gentiles, but the Jews are to be graffed in again. "Then will I bring the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them."

There is a clause in the 61st, verse of this chapter, which intimates the change of the dispensation of the covenant, when the gentiles should be gathered into the sheep fold. "And I will give them unto thee for daughters, *but, not by thy covenant*," i. e. not under the same typical dispensation. The present dispensation of the covenant of grace is called a new covenant in the 8th chapter of Hebrews. The God of Israel promised his ancient church, that they should, in a future day, have gentiles for children; but intimates that this should not be until that peculiar dispensation, which they were then under, should be done away;—so that they must not expect to see converted gentiles living in all respects like Jews. Perhaps this clause, "*but not by thy covenant*," was added to the promise, "I will give them unto thee for daughters," to prepare the way for this more easy conversion of the Jews to the church made up of gentiles, and keep-

ing up the worship of God, without paying any attention to the ceremonial law. When they shall be prepared candidly to search their own scriptures, they will find this account of the conversion of the gentiles answer to what they see exemplified before their eyes in the reformed gentile church. I have dwelt on this last idea the longer, because I think it strengthens the supposition, that Sodom and Samaria are put for the gentile world, which, for a long time, lived without God.

Objection. The literal Sodom is particularly described as to her local situation v. 46, and as to her character verses 49, and 50. The Lord also declares, "Therefore I took them away as I saw good." They were all destroyed, both the city and its inhabitants, therefore if Sodom is to be restored to her former estate, the very same people, who were burned up with fire and brimstone, and sent down to hell to endure the vengeance of everlasting fire, must be restored to the blessedness of the upper world.

To this objection we answer: Babylon, the seat of the Chaldean empire, was utterly destroyed before the time of St. John, and yet we repeatedly read of Babylon in the Revelation, as a city to be destroyed in a time then future. This, no doubt, means something beside the literal Babylon, and yet when this mystical Babylon is to be portrayed before us, the literal Babylon, which stood on the river Euphrates, is described. Revel. xvi. 12. Compare Rev. xviii. 2. with Isa. xiii. 19-22. When Christ spake by parables he described the kingdom of heaven by a plain and natural similitude of things, which are familiar to our senses. When he would give us clearer ideas of the kingdom of heaven, by a marriage supper, he described nothing but the marriage supper. When one thing is used to typify another, a description of the type is, in reality, a description of the thing typified. So when in the book of Revelation, the destruction of mystical Babylon is foretold, it is said the river Euphrates is to be dried up, that the way of the Kings of the east may be prepared. Also the utter desolation of spiritual Babylon is described, by her becoming a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. This was literally the case with ancient Babylon.

It is evident from Revel. xi. 8, that Sodom is used in the scriptures, in a sense which is not literal. "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom, &c." If I am not right in making Sodom and Samaria represent the whole gentile world, they must be supposed to represent some particular gentile nations: for it is very evident from the passage before us, in its connection with the whole chapter, that it is a prophecy of something which is to take place here, upon this stage of action, and is not designed to give us an account of any thing which is to be done in the unseen world.

As to the phrase, "return to their *former* estate," it certainly must be as difficult to explain, on the system which supposes the wicked Sodomites are to be brought from the bottomless pit to the third heavens, as on any other plan: for surely the for-

mer estate of these wicked Sodomites, who were destroyed, was not very good. They had a fertile plain, which furnished them with a fulness of bread; but the Sodomites were certainly never holy—they were never friends to God. But as Sodom was once rich and prosperous, and afterwards utterly overthrown, so when the gentile world is spiritually called Sodom, its conversion to the church of God may be expressed by Sodom's returning to her former estate. The first estate of the whole human race in our first parents was an estate of friendship and communion with God. After the apostacy, the church was set up in the family of Adam, and his whole family were at first visibly in it; but when Cain slew his brother, he *went out from the presence of the Lord.* The Gentiles, as well as Jews, were included in the family of Noah. Then there was no distinction between Jew and Gentile—all were in the same ark, and professed subjection to the true God. After this, those, who have since been called Gentiles, departed from the true God, the knowledge of whom they did not like to retain, and became idolaters. It is not therefore very improper to represent their conversion, by a *return to their former estate.*

Attention to this text of scripture leads us to this remark, That it is dangerous to build an important doctrine of our faith, on an intricate text. The prophetic part of the scripture is commonly the most difficult to understand, especially for those, whose historical and general knowledge is much confined. Prophecies are often extremely difficult to comprehend, until they are explained by their fulfilment. The text, which we have been considering, appears to be a prophecy. Its true meaning has been thought to be rather obscure; now, to build upon a particular explanation of it, a doctrine, which may serve as an opiate to lull to sleep millions of sinners, whom it highly concerns to be awake, is extreme folly and madness.

An Essay on the Character of lukewarm Christians; and on the reason why they are so odious to Christ; written by the late Rev. Lynde Huntington.

PERHAPS we shall more clearly discern the character of the lukewarm, if we briefly distinguish them from several sorts of persons from whom they essentially differ.—They differ from avowed infidels and from the openly immoral. These are not lukewarm, but positively cold. They have no appearance of friendship to Christ nor even of neutrality in his cause. They are open enemies. Nor can they, who make no pretensions of friendship to Christ, be classed with the lukewarm, whatever may be their visible character. However moral any may be, and however regularly they may attend the institutions of religion, if they neither avow, nor think themselves the friends of Christ, they are not to be classed with the lukewarm. They also are positively cold. On the one hand, the lukewarm differ from all such as are openly, or confessedly,

the enemies of God; and on the other, from all who are his sincere and upright friends.

I shall now mention several characteristics of the lukewarm.

1. They claim the character of Christians, and indulge a flattering opinion of their own goodness and safety. Some publicly profess friendship to Christ, and attend the special ordinances of his house. They not only think themselves, but would be thought by others, the faithful followers of Christ. Others entertain the same honorable opinion of themselves, though they have never made a public profession of religion. Perhaps they secretly compliment themselves as less ostentatious and assuming than the open professor, and especially as more prudent in shunning responsibility and exposure to public remarks. But all the lukewarm, whether professors or not, think favorably of themselves. To the church of the Laodiceans it was written—"Thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing."

2. The lukewarm are ignorant and insensible of the deep depravity of their hearts. "Thou knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." Inattentive to the character and law of God, they are blind to the glories of the one, and to the extent and spirituality of the other. Hence, like the apostle, they are alive without the law. They know not that the law is spiritual, and that they are carnal, sold under sin. They bless themselves in their own righteousness, though they are the servants and bondslaves of Satan. They rejoice in their own security, though their feet stand on slippery places, and they are, every moment, liable to fall into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, and to be tormented day and night forever and ever. Though in the utmost danger of endless woe, they fondly imagine they are entitled to the joys of heaven. For they know not their wretchedness and misery and poverty and blindness and nakedness.

3. The lukewarm are disposed, as much as possible, to limit their seasons of devotion, both as to their frequency and length. To these seasons some attention must be paid, to quiet their consciences, and to maintain their favorable opinion of themselves. But lukewarmness ill accords with the exercises of devotion. These, in their very nature, are an avowal of sensibility and spiritual affection. Hence the lukewarm are inclined to render their seasons of secret prayer, of reading the scriptures and meditation as few and as short as they can, and yet maintain the fond conceit of their goodness and safety.

4. The religious services of the lukewarm are heartless and unsatisfactory. The pure and exalted pleasures of piety arise from fervor and sensibility of heart in view of the great and glorious objects of faith and hope. Habit and a stupified conscience may make the religious duties of the lukewarm tolerable, and self-righteousness may cause them to review their devotions with self-applause. But in the performance of religious duties the lukewarm experience no pleasure and satisfaction. They cannot say with the holy psalmist—"It is

good for me to draw near to God. How sweet are thy words to my taste ; yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth ! How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts ! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord." The lukewarm are so far from having such fervent affections and high delight as are expressed by the psalmist, that they imagine a belief of such affections in the duties of religion is an evidence of enthusiasm, if not of distraction.

5. The lukewarm have no anxious concern for the honor and prosperity of the church, and the salvation of souls. They cannot say, " If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth ; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." They can behold their families and friends and neighbors visibly living without hope and without God in the world, and treasuring up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, and yet feel little or no concern, and make no exertions for their salvation. They are as unaffected with the sins of others, as they are ignorant and insensible of their own sins. They can stand in the way of sinners, and sit in the seat of the scornful. They are not grieved when they behold transgressors, nor do rivers of waters run down their eyes because men keep not God's law. The profane and ungodly feel no restraint in their presence, and are never put out of countenance by their bold and faithful reproofs. If the lukewarm are found in the church, and are under solemn covenant vows to watch over their brethren, and to maintain the discipline of Christ's house ; to keep these vows is the least of their concerns. They can see the church scandalized, and the Saviour dishonored by his professed friends, without opening their mouths, or moving a hand to purify and reform. As to the interests of religion, they are without life and vigor.

6. The lukewarm are displeased with zeal and affection in others. If their displeasure be not openly manifested, it is secretly felt. They must condemn the zeal and fervor of others, to justify their own apathy and lukewarmness. Indifference is an enemy to zeal. The lukewarm often impute the zeal of others to weakness, or to wrong views of religion, or to a want of judgment and prudence. But when the flame of love and zeal in sincere Christians burns pure and bright, and exhibits such light to the consciences of the lukewarm as excites a painful fear that all their hopes are a deceitful dream ; their lukewarmness is sometimes exchanged for an unhallowed heat. They can no longer maintain a torpid, indifferent spirit. They impute the ardor and activity of sincere Christians, not to weakness, or mistake, or mere imprudence ; but to hypocrisy, or pride, or self-sufficiency.

7. The lukewarm are not pleased with such books and such preaching as distinguish between true and false religion, and enforce the duty of self-examination. Such instruction condemns their vain pretensions and delusive hopes. If religion consist essentially in the vigorous

exercise of holy affections, the lukewarm certainly do not possess it. They are pleased to hear an attendance on the forms of religion recommended and enforced; but they do not love to hear that they must be pure in heart, and that their affections must be constantly and supremely devoted to God. They can bear discourses which are merely speculative and argumentative; but are wounded and disgusted by such as are experimental and discriminating.

8. The lukewarm have little faith in what is called a work of grace in the heart, and in the influences of the Holy Spirit in convincing, renewing and sanctifying the soul. If they ever professed to believe in these things, as lukewarmness prevails, they are disposed to view them as enthusiastic, or superstitious. With the lukewarmness and insensibility, which they conceive to be consistent with true religion, they can see no need of the enlivening power and grace of the Holy Spirit to quicken and prepare the heart for the duties of religion, and to maintain the fervor of holy affections.

Having mentioned several distinguishing characteristics of the lukewarm, I pass to assign the reasons why they are so odious and offensive to Christ.

"So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." The lukewarm church of Laodicea were as disgusting and odious to Christ as the most nauseating substance to the stomach. He says—"I would thou wert cold or hot." He intimates that in his view they were even worse than the openly and confessedly wicked. He would choose to see positive coldness and open opposition, rather than their hypocritical friendship and lukewarmness. But why are the lukewarm so hateful to Christ? Because,

1. They cast contempt on objects of infinite excellence and importance. To be lukewarm as to the excellence and glory of the divine character, to be unaffected with the wonders of redeeming love, to be indifferent about the favor and displeasure of the Almighty, to be unmoved in view of the eternal joys of heaven and the eternal sorrows of hell, is practically despising these objects. Lukewarmness in regard to objects of infinite importance—is so disproportioned and absurd, that it has the appearance of mockery and contempt. Hence it is, in the highest degree, offensive to Christ, whose character and cause demand and deserve the supreme regard and the warmest attachment of every heart.

2. Lukewarmness in religion is the worst kind of hypocrisy. It is a pretension of friendship where none is felt. The lukewarm avow themselves the disciples of Christ and say—Lord, Lord; but in their hearts they despise him, or do not intend to treat him as their Lord and Master. They sit before him as his people, they hear his words, they speak to him in prayer and praise, but their hearts are withholden—going after their covetousness and other forbidden objects. They have a name and profess to live, but are dead. They say they are Jews and are not, but do lie. This hypocrisy renders them loathsome in the sight of the living and true God.

3. The lukewarm indulge a dangerous, pernicious delusion. Their notion of religion disarms the law of its awakening and convicting power. None are so difficult to enlighten as they who are wise in their own conceit. None are so hard to convict as the self-righteous. Accordingly Christ declares that publicans and harlots shall enter into the kingdom of God before the self-righteous and self-conceited. Their delusion is not only infinitely dangerous and commonly fatal to themselves, but highly pernicious to others. They neither enter into the kingdom of God themselves, nor suffer such as are entering to go in. Their views and conduct are very ensnaring. Multitudes are predisposed to embrace the views, and imitate the conduct of the lukewarm. The zeal and self-denial of true religion is wounding to the stupidity and selfishness of the unconverted. But the example of the lukewarm never condemns the practices of the ungodly, nor wounds the carnal heart. The world can bear their religion, and are emboldened by their example to proceed in the neglect of the things which belong to their everlasting peace, until they are for ever hidden from their eyes. If the lukewarm made no pretensions to religion, none would look to them for an example, and none would be destroyed through their delusions. But as they not only destroy themselves, but are the means of destroying others, they are hateful to him who died for the salvation of immortal souls.

4. The lukewarm disregard, or pervert and wrest the holy scriptures. Their views and feelings and conduct are a constant denial and contradiction of the truth as it is in Jesus, and as it is taught in the oracles of God. Would they openly avow their hatred of Christ, and their opposition to true religion, they would be consistent. But they betray the Son of man with a kiss. Under the most confident profession of religion, they most effectually oppose the cause of Christ, and serve the interest of Satan. Hence they are more odious and offensive to Christ than his avowed enemies. Hence he says to every lukewarm soul —"I would thou wert cold, or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold, nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

He that hath an ear to hear let him hear what the spirit saith unto the church of the Laodiceans. Let no one, who is lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, imagine that he is rich and increased with goods and has need of nothing, while he is wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.

Let every one hear and obey the counsel of the Amen, the faithful and true witness—who says—"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest see."

The Religious Remembrancer, extracted chiefly from the writings of ancient, eminent divines.

NO. I.

REMEMBER that there is a God, who made, preserves,

and maintains you, without whom you cannot live, who hath given you an holy and righteous law, by which you must be governed at present, and judged hereafter; so that you are not at liberty to do, speak or think as you will, but are bound to know, obey, love, worship, serve, and glorify him, who is your chief end, and is willing to be your eternal happiness.

God is a being of incomprehensible greatness and majesty, of transcendent holiness and purity, of infinitely glorious and amiable excellences; he is most worthy of our humble obedience and choicest affections, and most able to reward them. It is our life and blessedness, and must be our study and business, to love and please him; if our affections are placed upon other things more than him, they are misplaced; and it will never be well with us until we know him better and love him more; and herein it concerns us especially to see to it, that we are sincere, as the very life and being of true religion consists in it; without which all our holy duties avail not. Certain it is that whatsoever we place our chief love and confidence upon, we make a God unto us; and if we love not the true God above all things, we highly affront his glorious goodness and majesty, and treat him not as God. Now since so much depends upon this, it becomes us very seriously to try where our love is placed; if upon God, we shall be very careful to please him, and cautious of offending him; we shall be frequently and diligently thinking of him, and studying his word, in order to know his excellences, and be acquainted with his will; the hopes of being interested in his favor, and living in his presence in heaven, in the perfection of holiness and love, will be more desired by us, than all the riches, honors or pleasures of this world. But how can any say that they love God, when they care not how little they think or speak of him; have no delight in his service, or zeal for his honor and glory; but can hear and see his name dishonored, his gospel derided, his laws contemned, his holy day profaned, and every thing that bears a resemblance to his moral image, of holiness, righteousness and truth, despised, without any grief of mind, or indignation of heart? How can they pretend to be lovers of God, who are lovers of pleasure more than God; and love and pursue the praise of men, more than the approbation and favor of the glorious majesty of heaven and earth? Who, when the practice of any religious duty, or the forbearance of any sin is likely to expose them to the sneers of the vicious, will rather injure their consciences, and incense their God, than venture the scoffs of a sinful worm? Let us hearken to conscience, and suffer it to do its office faithfully, that we may grow wiser by its reproofs.—You know what it is to love your friends, your pleasure, your money; do you, by as true and full experience, know what it is to love God? As the worship of this great and glorious God, is what we are often employed in, and by which he is more honored or dishonored, than by most other actions of our lives; if we have any knowledge of, or respect to God, it will influence us

to do it in the best manner we can; it will teach us, whenever we engage in God's holy worship, whether in secret, in the family, or in public, to perform it with humble reverence, and strict attention of mind, and excite in us admiring thoughts and dutiful wills, ingenuous fear and humble faith, cheerful praises, and profound adorations, as being an infinite and pure spirit, always present with our minds, knowing the most secret and retired thoughts of our hearts, and observing the disposition and behavior of all those that worship him. The success of our worship depends upon our behavior in it; we are doing a work by which we shall be made better or worse. God will be either honored or affronted, our souls comforted and purified, or hardened and stupified; and the word of God made either the savor of life or death to every soul that hears it. Let us have grace, therefore, that we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and Godly fear, since our God is a consuming fire to all impenitent triflers with him; but the bountiful rewarder of all that humbly and diligently seek him.

No. II.

REMEMBER that man at first made holy and happy, by his disobedience to God, is become sinful and miserable; greatly disposed to evil, and averse to that which is good; whereby he has rendered himself odious to the infinite purity and holiness of God, and lies under the just condemnation of his righteous law; so that if he dies in that state, he is undone for ever.

It is most certain that the natural disposition of man is sinful, his mind blinded, his affections greatly disordered, his conscience defiled; and obstinate self will, and alienation of mind from God and his holy and spiritual law, runs through the human race: and it is as certain that, while men continue in this state, they are utterly incapable of being happy in God, are under his awful anger and curse, and subject to all miseries in the present life, and eternal perdition after death. Men indeed move about senseless and jovial, in this deplorable state, and are either unconcerned about the consequence of death, or deceiving themselves with false hopes of happiness after it, and this arises from their insensibility and stupidity; but their hopes are such, that God must deny his glorious perfections of wisdom, truth, justice, and holiness, and falsify the unalterable declarations of his most sacred word to accomplish: and yet, how difficult is it to persuade them to let go these false and iniquitous hopes, that they may build their expectations of happiness upon a foundation that will bear the just and righteous trial of God, and stand unreproved by him at the solemn judgment day!

Look within, unhappy sinner, and remember that conscience is registering all thy sins, which though they now lie forgotten and unobserved, will go with thee to the judgment of God, and be a thousand witnesses against thee. Consider all the instances of thy contempt of the holy God, and rebellion against him; all the atheism and irreligion that are in thy heart; the swarms of evil thoughts that

rise in thy mind like the scum of a defiled vessel, and shew the corrupt fountain from whence they flow; recollect all thy blasphemous and unbelieving thoughts; thy adulterous, covetous, and injurious thoughts; thy proud, revengeful, and envious thoughts; consider the instances of thy sabbath-breaking, profaning the holy name of God, neglect of his worship, and irreverence in it; thy forgetfulness of God, and enmity against him; thy unmercifulness, uncharitableness injustice, and falsehood; thy intemperance, lust, and passion; all the sins thou hast committed in the relations of a husband or wife, parent or child, master or servant; and these and many others aggravated by being done against knowledge and the means of it, the remonstrances of conscience, the reproof of friends, the afflictions of God to warn thee, and his blessings to allure thee; with deliberation, continuance, and delight. Review, I say, thy soul under the condemnation of all these crimes unrepented of and unpardoned, and think what a sad and miserable state those must be in, who are under the power and guilt of such numerous and complicated sins; surrounded by the presence of an omnicient and angry God; hanging over everlasting burnings, by the slender and brittle thread of life, which death may snap asunder the next moment, and introduce into the society of devils and damned spirits, for ever.

(To be continued.)

Memoirs of Mrs. Sarah Woodruff.

MRS. Sarah Woodruff was born at Lebanon June 17, 1757; both her parents were persons professing godliness; but her mother dying while she was young, the care of her education fell chiefly on her grandparents, by whom every attention was paid, to impress her mind early with a sense of moral obligation, and to instruct her in the great doctrines of Christianity.

Nothing materially different from other youth, appeared in her deportment, until she arrived to the period of 17 or 18 years; when by the influences of the Holy Spirit, she was brought under a deep concern for her soul. Her convictions were strong and steady, and her discovery of light proportionably joyful. Soon after, she was admitted as a member of the Christian church, and ever after appeared a steady and affectionate follower of the Lamb of God.

About the age of 21 she was married to Mr. Jonathan Alden, a man of piety; who was, a few years after, lost at sea. About a year after this, she was called to part with one of her children. During this repeated and severe affliction, she exhibited such resignation to the will of God, as commanded the attention, and procured the esteem of all her acquaintance. About this time she was again married to Mr. Hezekiah N. Woodruff, who was afterwards ordained Pastor of the first Church of Christ in Stonington.

Her natural temper was cheerful, and her deportment spright-

ly. In the social circle, her conversation was lively and instructing; but in the religious peculiarly edifying. She possessed an uncommon acquaintance with the doctrines of grace, and with the holy scriptures. She was happily qualified for the discharge of the duties of domestic life; and here her virtues were most conspicuous. Her deportment to her husband was at once, respectful, and endearing. She taught her children to rise up before their father and call him blessed.

The stranger, she received with cautiousness and hospitality, and the poor never departed from the door of her house empty. She lived religion, and exhibited the power of its consolations, by resignation under the loss of friends: among whom were a husband and four children. But especially under her bodily complaints, which were very many and severe. In her last sickness, which continued for the period of more than five years, her Christian graces shone the brightest. Heaven seemed to beam upon her; and she often conversed of death, judgment, and eternity, with the greatest composure. She was never heard to utter a word of complaint, although her distress was often so great as to threaten immediate dissolution. She often expressed her heavenly mindedness, and her entire confidence in the love of Christ.

The following instance which occurred at a period, when her life was not expected but for a few days, may serve as a specimen of some of her joyous seasons.

One morning just at the dawn of day, she awoke her husband, who had been a little while asleep by her side, by saying, my dear, are you asleep? I know you are weary and need rest: you have shared with me the sorrows of the night, I want you should partake with me in the joys of the morning. This, said she, has been by far the happiest morning of my life. I have thought in times past, that I have received sensible communications from the Spirit of the Lord. But this exceeds them all. I have not been asleep since you lay down. But I have been filled with the presence of my Saviour. O! the love of Christ, when he is shed abroad in my heart! the angel which has filled me with his presence, has watched over your slumbers, and perhaps has caused you to sleep, that my felicities might not be disturbed. Yes, it has appeared to me, as if my Saviour stood before me; and the angels of God were ascending and descending, continually. Yet I have seen nothing with my bodily eyes. But "surely the Lord is in this place," this has been to me none other than the house of the Lord and this is the gate of heaven." It appeared almost impossible that God could manifest himself in such a manner to his children, in such a wicked place. But then said she, that is the place where they most need his presence. Hence we have the promise of the Saviour: I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. So it is that he manifests himself unto us, as he does not unto the world. Here after a short pause, she seemed to kindle into a rapturous strain; and said, How can a soul with such foretastes as these, be willing to return to the

toilsome burdens of a deceitful world.—But I am resigned to the will of God. And repeated,

"My willing soul would stay,
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

Oh! if God should continue such seasons of refreshment, we should be totally unfit for the discharge of the duties of time and sense! Here her husband replied, that God had ordinarily reserved such seasons of refreshment for the saints, on their near approach to death, and observed that the full enjoyment of God, from her, was perhaps not far distant. She replied, I am entirely resigned to go or stay. My soul is all praise—I see God in every thing.—The first thing which struck my mind this morning was, hearing the cocks crow, I said, who taught these birds to know the approach of morning light. I saw that it was God; my heart was enlarged and my mouth was filled with praise. Her husband observed, that in all probability this season would not continue long, he therefore hoped in her near approach to God, she would pray for him, his children and for the Church of Christ. She replied, I have not so much as once thought to pray. I have been all praise. Some mention being made of the family, she replied, God knows best what to do with his creatures. I am resigned. He will dispose of them to his own glory. I desire to have my will wholly swallowed up in him. She further observed, I have had a most delightful sense of the forgiveness of God, and know that my sins are forgiven. For to whom much is forgiven the same loveth much. And I have been enabled to forgive all my enemies, and I hope that God will forgive them too, if it is consistent with his glory: God will do right. After this she recovered, and her strength was restored so far, that she continued many months. During which period she had many very exalted views of the character and moral government of God, and expressed the strongest confidence in the Saviour.

In the summer season of 1803, she journeyed to Coventry to spend a few weeks with her daughther who was married and settled there, while her husband took a journey to Philadelphia and its vicinity. Her husband who was absent, and her children, who were left at Stonington, seemed to occupy many of her thoughts; but still they drew not her heart from heaven. During the summer, her communion with God was frequent and remarkable, and her patience and resignation was to the astonishment of her acquaintance. The following is a paragraph in a letter from her son in law to her husband. "Mother appears to enjoy most of the time a sweet resignation to the divine will, and a holy delight in the divine government. Sometimes when she is in the greatest distress of body, her soul seems to be filled with raptures of joy. I trust she is a pious woman and ready for death. Comfort yourself with these reflections. I take abundant delight in conversing with her, when God appears to draw nigh to her soul by his special presence."—She would frequently say, I know that my Saviour loves me, and sometimes added, for he hath given

himself for me, and I shall be his. As she drew towards the close of life, she would often call her son to converse about death. He would ask her whether she was afraid to die, she said no, I am neither afraid to die, nor to be dead: but I know nothing about dying.

Her husband and children appeared to be the great objects of her earthly affection, and about them she continued to converse, until about a fortnight before her death; when she received a letter from her husband, stating, that he should be with her, God willing, on the fifteenth of September. But this was not the will of God; for he was taken sick more than 300 miles distant from her, the day that she received the letter at Coventry. With this letter in her hand she sat down, and appeared to have some conflict; which was noticed by those around her: rising from her seat she laid the letter down, saying, I shall never see my dear husband, any more on the land of the living—I shall never see him any more; nor one of my children. I now give them up to God. Her friends expostulated with her, that the time was near when he was to be expected, and that her children were near, and could be brought to her, any time, at her direction. But she repeated the declaration, and said, I have now given them up to God for ever; I have nothing more to do with them; I have done with them: Calmly adding, and I shall never see one of them again. Being enquired of whether any of them should be sent for, she said no. And from that time was never heard to mention one of their names, nor suffer a letter from them to be read in her hearing, nor even suffer others to speak of them to her, without rebuke.

About a week before her death, though she could still walk the room, which she continued till the last day of her life, she requested her daughter to help her into the chamber, where she observed, she should be out of the way. Her daughter replied with some concern, I hope mamma does not think she is in the way. She looked upon her with a cheerful countenance, and said, child, I am going to die in a few days, and you will have a great concourse of people, and many friends—and your house is not convenient to have me below; there I shall be out of the way, and there I must go. A short period after she retired to her chamber, she called for her trunk, and took out those things which would be needful for her interment, and ordered her trunk to be set aside. A day or two after this she directed that her children should be sent for to be present at her funeral. And having given the necessary directions for the journey, she said, now I have done with the world. I have nothing to do, but to wait my Master's call. After this she appeared perfectly calm and said little or nothing, until the moment of death—when she was only heard to say, Is this death? Can this be death? I am sure I never knew.—And this but just time enough, for her friends to gather round her bed, to see her, without a struggle or a groan, breathe her soul out into the hands of her dear Lord, who after a long and a most distressing train of sufferings,

called her home to rest, on the 14th of Sept. 1803.

She departed this life in the 47th year of her age, having been the mother of 11 children —she left a husband and 7 children to mourn her loss.

Letter from an Aunt to a Niece, under religious impressions.

Northampton, April 6th, 1806.

MY DEAR NIECE,

I HAVE wanted to write to you ever since the death of your father. An opportunity now presents. Death has a third time come into your family, and demanded its victim; twice has he taken an infant for his prey, and loudly called upon you all to be ready, for with his times, and his seasons you are yet unacquainted; the third time coming he took your parent, and I hope and trust, that he has gone to partake of the joys and blessedness of a once crucified but now glorious Saviour. You are now called upon to put in practice all the good instructions he ever gave you, not by your father, his voice will never again sound in your ears in this life, but by a much more powerful voice, the voice of the Spirit—the Holy Spirit, see you quench it not, nor despise its calls. The Saviour—the blessed Saviour, who was wounded for *our* transgressions—who was bruised for our iniquities—whose side has been pierced most deeply with our grievous sins—is now, even while your heart is yet tender from the loss of your father, calling upon you by his Holy Spirit of love to be reconciled to God. He has shewn you a little of the evil nature of sin; that it exposes you, being a subject of sin, to the wrath of a justly incensed God; for God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. What then can you do? you feel (or at least I hope you do) that you have no good thing in you—that you are all over sin—and that if you remain in this state you must be for ever miserable. In this situation sinners are sometimes brought almost to despair of the mercies of God—and in fact to be angry that God will not give them comfort—and so unreasonable are they and provoking to God, as to question with themselves whether they had not better for the sake of present ease go back and embrace their old open sins, and defy the wrath of the Almighty. But beware, lest you tempt the Spirit to withdraw its divine instructions. God has commissioned his Spirit to teach you to prepare your heart to receive a noble guest! Be astonished, O ye heavens, at the infinite goodness and long-suffering of God!—You must be taught what you need—you must be brought to see that you in a state of nature have never done any thing to the honor and glory of that God of whom you are asking infinite mercies—even eternal life—an immortal crown of glory. But you are still (if in a state of nature) rebelling against his laws. We are very hard to learn—you must remember my dear niece, that the earth must have a great deal done to it before it is fit for the reception

of seed for our common bread. To the savages of the wilderness who never saw a civilized country, the work of a good farmer must appear very strange; to see the lofty trees of the forest hewn down and piled in heaps all over the lot to be burnt, then many of the roots forcibly dragged out of the bosom of the earth, which till now had been concealed, in order to make way for still further operation before the seed is sown—for you must be sensible that the earth is still unfit for seed—and should an unskilful hand in haste to see the corn thrive, or an idle one who was unwilling to bestow further labor, in such a state of the earth, throw *on* the good seed (for it could not be cast in) what would it avail?—The fowls of the air would gather it and all the labor together with the seed would be lost. Slight not the comparison of the earth with our hearts—but remember it was drawn by the Saviour of sinners who cultivates our hearts. If we will endure cultivation, we must be made sensible of our sinful state—we must be also sensible that our sins are against the great Lord of heaven and earth. His Spirit must operate in such a manner as to prepare the heart for the reception of the blessed Spirit, and to be capable of rejoicing in the glorious displays of God's infinite perfections which he is about to make to the sinner. You must be sensible of your darkness, or you cannot feel what an infinite mercy God bestows upon you, when he brings you into his marvellous light. You must wait patiently for God to do his work as he sees fit—begging and intreating him to do with you and for you, as is most for his own glory and your soul's good—for he willeth not the death of a sinner; but rather that he should repent and live. Had God been seeking the destruction of sinners his Son might have been spared that cruel and ignominious death. Had the Son been unwilling to save, he might have remained in the bosom of his Father surrounded with glory, instead of coming into this lower world, to be cast out and rejected of men, and to be treated with the coldest contempt, while he was suffering all he suffered, that rebellious man might be prevailed upon to accept of mercy. It would be in vain for me to tell you now, what I think passes in your heart while unregenerate—for I know by experience that we do not believe the word of God himself—how then should one of the weakest of his creatures presume to do, what the word of God, without the powerful influences of his blessed Spirit, cannot effect.—But to the mercy of God through Christ, I commend you—Christ's merits alone must plead for you—he stands as a wall between an offended God, and offending man—and as a shield, wards off impending danger, which it seems David had in view when he said, "Behold O God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed. If David, a man after God's own heart, despaired of being fit for God to look upon, when in the very act of the most fervent pious prayer, when he says "my soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord—my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God;" then surely we, who have no such signal

blessings as he had, need to flee to Christ as our refuge and hiding place. May the Lord soon make you hear joy and gladness, and create in you a clean heart, and renew a right frame of Spirit within you—then will you say "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me." Ask of God to fit and prepare you, how, and when he pleases; ask a meek and quiet Spirit; be patient; be contented to wait God's time. "He that believeth shall not make haste," are words I wanted somebody to explain to me last week. The contemplation of this subject unfolds it, and now, lest you should faint by the way or be discouraged, let me transcribe some of the many precious promises there are recorded in the word of God, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh, and I will put my Spirit within you, and *cause* you to walk in my statutes, and ye *shall* keep my judgments and do them. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God; be it known unto you, I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it; yet saith the Lord, I *will* be enquired of to do it for them, and they shall *know* that I am the Lord."

I must leave you, with wishing you all that happiness which I trust God is now offering you. Quench not the Spirit which is commissioned to bring you glad tidings.

I am your affectionate
Aunt.

Revival of Religion in Washington.

To the Editors of the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine.

Gentlemen,

WANT of health has hitherto prevented any communication from me, respecting the late special work of God in this place. The same cause still requires me to be less particular, in the details of that work, than, in other circumstances, might have been desirable. Many things which, at the time, conspired to interest the heart, have now lost their impression. No more than a general outline can be attempted: and this, consistently with our obligations to infinite mercy, cannot be withheld. Though this church has enjoyed a preached gospel, with very little interruption, since its formation, a period of 64 years, nothing that could properly be termed a revival of religion, had ever taken place, until the present. In the vacancy, immediately preceding my ordination, there was, in one part of the society, more than usual attention; and a number united with the church. In the three succeeding years, including 1799, twenty-three persons more were added. During the four next years, only ten persons made a public profession of religion. Death and removals were rapidly thinning our numbers; and there was room for solemn apprehension, that soon a solitary few would meet at the communion table; and our Zion be left to mourn that by multitudes, her "solemn feasts and her sabbaths were forgotten."—

Though this people have long been accustomed to a decent and full attendance on public worship, and though as free, probably, as almost any other, from open immoralities; it ought to be acknowledged, with humility, that, at the period abovementioned, the influence of vital religion, amongst us, was externally low. Many hearts were locked up in impenetrable stupidity. Many families had no altar for God. Many parents seemed to behold their dear offspring going in the ways that lead to destruction, without uttering one warning, or offering one prayer, for their eternal salvation. *Out* of the church, was to be seen a general carelessness—*in* it, a spirit of deep slumber: want of discipline; want of active, brotherly love; want of Christian watchfulness, faithfulness, prayerfulness; want of every thing almost, but a *cold, cold profession*. My heart *aches*, at the remembrance; and trembles, under the apprehension that such a season may return.

A glimmering hope of better things was enjoyed, for a short time, in the winter of 1801. A weekly church conference was attended regularly, about two months; when it declined, till it entirely ceased. The same unpleasant result attended every similar undertaking, the winter following. After a few weeks, some other object engrossed the attention, and the conference was forgotten. At a leisure season, and on one of the finest evenings in the year, when it was to have been attended at my house, not an individual came. It seemed as though an offended God were about to seal us up, under the holy rebuke, "*sleep on now and take your rest.*"—That the only hope of self-destroying men is the sovereign mercy of God, I had long believed, and often felt, in some measure, but had never so *deeply* felt before. Means, however, were not to be neglected. For several years, previous to this, endeavors had been used to interest the church in behalf of the rising generation. Early in the summer of 1802, special meetings were appointed for the youth: but not until the express approbation and support of the church had been engaged in favor of the object: as it was foreseen that without this, no permanent good would be effected. These meetings were attended every other week, in the form of a *theological school*. At each meeting, a question, in the order of a system, was given: accompanied with an extemporary lecture; or with notice that a sermon would be adapted to the subject, on the following sabbath. When the latter course was taken, an unusual attention was apparent in the youth, as well as in many others. At the meeting, succeeding that on which the question was given, the papers, that had been written by the youth, were received and read publicly. After a number of practical, solemn remarks on the last question, another was given, in the same manner. From respect to the delicacy of the writers, their papers were received so as to leave the author of each one unknown to every other. With the same precaution, they were returned; having been reviewed at leisure, such corrections or remarks as were thought necessary, being made on them, in writing.—

These meetings, begun with faint expectations, succeeded to my joy and astonishment. They, in some degree, substituted solid improvement for the ordinary levities of young people: they excited a relish for profitable conversation, reading, and reflection: they furnished the mind with useful ideas, not only increased, but rendered the more *permanent*, by the labor of acquiring them: and what is most important of all, they opened an avenue for the solemn influence of truth, by a divine blessing, to reach the conscience and the heart. A respectable number usually attended on these occasions; and twelve or fifteen often wrote on the same question. It was surprising to witness the progress, made by some of these, not only in correct writing, but in doctrinal knowledge. For three successive summers, these pleasant and profitable meetings were continued; when it was the will of an holy God to suspend them, through my impaired health. To that will, I desire to bow submissively, while I feel this allotment as the severest trial of my life.

Near the close of the summer 1803, things began to wear a brighter aspect. Several persons became seriously impressed. At the request of six or eight brethren of the church, weekly conferences were revived. There was, henceforward, no more difficulty to maintain them. During the winter, the operations of the divine Spirit were discernible, in a part of the society. The church, which had appeared to languish, as with a wasting hectic, put on the aspect of returning health. Through the next spring and summer, though thirteen had been added to Christ's visible family, we were still betwixt hope and fear. God's people *longed* for a revival, rather than *expected* it. Scarcely did they dare to believe that so blessed a season was already begun; and that the day had indeed dawned, which was to succeed a night of more than 60 years. In the autumn, the Sun of Righteousness arose upon us, with healing and salvation in his wings. As in another "valley of the son of Hinnom," there was a great shaking. Dry bones, animated by the breath of the Almighty, stood up, new-born believers. Numbers, like the smitten Saul, were ready to say: "Lord, what wilt thou have us to do?" while the children of Zion, beheld, with overflowing hearts, and with thankful tongues acknowledged, "This is the finger of God." The work was stamped, conspicuously, with the impress of its Divine Author: and its joyful effects, evinced no other than the agency of omnipotence. Every sabbath exhibited the striking contrast betwixt a time of stupidity and a time of attention, among a people. Many, who had frequented the sanctuary from custom, or curiosity, unmoved, by all that is joyful or alarming in the gospel; whose attention had been more occupied with a *new face*, or a *new fashion*, than with the eternal interests of their own souls, were now in the attitude of anxious and solemn enquiries, listening to the instructions of the pulpit. At conferences, people collected as though awake, and in earnest. Even those, whom age and infirmity might well have excus-

ed, were often seen miles from home, at an evening meeting. On some of these occasions, the crowd which came together, reminded one of the assembly at Capernaum, when, "There was not room to receive them, no, not so much as about the doors." Before the beginning of winter, the solemnity had extended, to almost every part of the place. So manifestly was it the work of God, that opposition, however it might have rankled in the bosoms of individuals, was awed into silence. Many old professors, amidst the majesty and glory of the scene, seemed unable to contain, and equally unable to express, the wonder and joy of their hearts. In *them*, slumber, at such a season, could hardly have been less than the lethargy of death. Thursday lectures, principally preached by neighboring ministers, were attended for several months, with great solemnity and profit. A weekly prayer meeting was also set up; which is since devoted to a special remembrance of the rising generation, the first week in every month. During a winter, unusually severe, nothing could surpass the resolution with which numbers attended to be instructed in the way of salvation. From the extremity of the season, apprehensions were entertained for persons of delicate constitutions: but the people were seldom, or never more healthy.

As the fruit of this precious and memorable season, fifty-four persons have been added to the church; none of whom, *blessed be God*, have, in their subsequent conduct, been left to discredit their holy profession. In consequence of such an accession, the situation of the church was thought to require that two new deacons should be chosen. This occasion, while it exhibited a prevailing, and very pleasing unanimity in the church, was rendered the more interesting, by a rare concurrence of circumstances. The vote of the brethren designated two young men to the office, twin-brothers, very exactly resembling each other, having joined the church together, about ten years before; and having married sisters; who are also now sisters in this church.

It would be more important to delineate, particularly, the nature and fruits of this work, did it not bear so strong affinity, in these respects, to the revivals once and again described, heretofore, in your Magazine. Without an exception, its special subjects were calm, and violent in their exercises; and embraced that system of religious sentiments, commonly acknowledged and received in our churches. Before this awakening, it was sometimes with difficulty that we could sing a sacramental hymn. After so many dear and promising youth, and among these, so respectable a portion of the singers, had been called into the church, our next communion left impressions in many bosoms, which can never, *never* be effaced. Cold must have been the heart, on that occasion, not to have felt what words cannot express. The recollection of these scenes excite joy; but joy mingled with pain. Alas, that any, who are perishing with a mortal disease, should slight so fair an opportunity to find the great Physi-

cian, and the healing-balm of the gospel! That season of special mercy is past: we have too many, and too mournful evidences that it *is past*. At least a thousand precious immortal souls remain, whose situation it becomes not a fallible, fellow creature to decide; but who, at present, do not profess to have any solid grounds of hope, beyond the grave. Oh, that the God of mercy may vouchsafe his gracious and powerful presence to this dear flock; and that this time of solemn and sweet refreshing, may be but the spring of a more prosperous summer and a more glorious harvest!

From the commencement of this work, to its visible decline, was more than eighteen months. One thing, which it has impressed, more deeply than ever, on my mind, is the benefit of religious conferences. These meetings, though frequent, seemed not at all to interfere with necessary, temporal employments. An increased industry could easily redeem the time, devoted to this purpose, from unprofitable, or foolish pursuits. Such as have been the real and happy subjects of this work, and have so often met to pray, and praise, and convene, when they shall be numbered with the saints of the most High, in the glories of his everlasting kingdom, will doubtless remember, with transport, these small portions of time, big with eternal joy. In days like these, lowering with dark prospects, over the church, and over the world, Christians, especially Christians who can meet in one half hour, most certainly, ought not to live like strangers.

The religious intruction of children and youth is another subject, the importance of which, has been rendered more strikingly apparent in this revival.—Of the number, added to the church, about three fourths had sprung from professing parents. Before this season, as is mentioned above, more than ordinary attention had been paid to the rising generation. Beside the meetings of the young people, the church, *as a church*, had appointed a catechising committee, to assist the pastor, in teaching the children. These catechisings have been since, regularly attended, during the summer season, between the services on every other sabbath; the children being classed, according to their knowledge.*

The period from twelve to twenty is eminently the learning, and the forming age. Perhaps no other equal period, so often determines the character for life, and the state for eternity.—

* In the fall of the year there is an annual catechising, when every child, that has attended the stated catechisings, through the season, receives some religious tract, purchased with money drawn from the church treasury, and corresponding in value, with the child's progress. The names of such as learn the catechism through, are also entered on the church records. This is designed, both as a direct excitement to the children, and as a document, which may be interesting, at future periods of this church. It is found that the catechisings of the church, of families, and of schools, mutually promote each other. From the register of the schools, in which is preserved their comparative improvements, in the various branches of instruction, it appears that in six of our district schools, examined in the close of the last winter, the number of children, that were able to repeat the Assembly's catechism through, was 101.

Still, this golden period is often spent, so as to be no better, or even worse, than a blank. Little is learned but what requires the labor of a life to unlearn.—Ought not something to be done, or at least seriously attempted, for a reformation in this respect? While infidelity is searching out every avenue, for infusing its deadly poison into the minds of the young, is it not matter of concern and surprise, that their religious instruction should not have had more share in the thoughts, the conversation, the prayers of God's people? Do not the signs of the times summon ministers and Christians generally, to exertions, more united, and more correspondent with an object of such acknowledged, and immense importance? Surely it is no reason for Zion's friends to count up discouragements and to fold their hands in sloth, surrounded as they are, with such alarming proofs, that Zion's foes neither slumber nor sleep. Does not sin lie at the door of our churches? Is not one important end of infant baptism too much forgotten? If it is a grand design of this ordinance "to draw the cares and prayers of the whole Christian church, towards the rising generation, and their everlasting concerns; to hold them up perpetually before our eyes, and to fix them habitually upon our hearts," I apprehend that no subject of equal magnitude is so lamentably neglected.

I am,
Gentlemen,
very respectfully
yours, &c.

EBENEZER PORTER.

Washington, }
Aug. 11, 1806. }

Memoirs of Mrs. Eunice Smith.

MRS. Eunice Smith, the subject of the following narrative, was the daughter of Mr. Gideon and Mrs. Sarah Hurd of Woodbury. She was born Nov. 1st, 1775, was married to Gideon Smith, jun. since deacon Smith of Salisbury, October 28th, 1794; and died Nov. 2d, 1805, aged 30 years and one day.

Her last sickness was short and painful. She was seized with a fever highly putrid, and attended with most malignant symptoms, which, in a few days ended in her death. All who witnessed the melancholy, but yet joyful scene of her death, were uncommonly impressed, with the exercises of her mind, in a near view of eternity. Christians standing around her were strengthened, and animated, in beholding the triumphs of grace over the king of terrors. Gainsayers could not but be confounded. And all appeared solicitous, that their last end might be like her's.

Those who witnessed her departure, were so impressed with the circumstances attending it, that they have desired a narrative of her experiences and death, might come to the public, hoping it may tend to awake the attention of the thoughtless sinner, and add some encouragement and support to Christians.

Mrs. Smith, after having her attention called up to a sense of her state by nature, and of the importance of religion, and experiencing the work of conviction for sin in her heart fearfully entertained a hope that she was "Born again," and on Lords day, September the 8th, 1799,

professed her attachment to the religion of Jesus, by publicly uniting with his church. She was afterwards considered a modest, meek, humble Christian. And though there was nothing until, and immediately preceding her last sickness, very uncommon in her as a Christian; yet she ever appeared to have the cause of Christ near her heart; and especially, if she heard any reproach or doubt his religion, she had a boldness and firmness in openly defending and honoring it.

In the summer before her death, she appeared more than usually engaged in religious duty, and lively and clear in her views of divine things. God appeared to have been preparing her for her last change. That grace, which, by his Spirit, it is hoped, was implanted in her soul, appeared, like leaven, to be leavening the whole lump.

Being necessarily detained from public worship, she gave herself more than usual to reading the scriptures, and to meditation and prayer. And, after being left alone on the sabbath, she frequently spoke of the views she had had of divine things, and the comfort she had taken in her God. She was more forward in speaking of the experiences of her soul, and entered with more freedom and engagedness on religious conversation. For some time before her death, her mind was fully impressed with the great goodness of that God in whom she lived and moved and had her being. These views led on to that calmness of mind, and that high enjoyment of religion, which, it will appear, she manifested in her last moments.

As she was seized very violently, it appeared from the first, that she would not recover. She was fully sensible of this, and never expressed a desire to live. Her whole desire was to depart and be with Christ. Being asked, "If she had no desire to 'live and enjoy the society of her 'friends, and help in bringing 'up her children for God;" she said, "I hope I can forsake 'father and mother and children and brothers and sisters, 'yea and my own life also for 'the sake of Christ. After I 'am gone, my children will be 'in the hands of the same God 'who has always protected them. 'I wish to have no will contrary to God's; and if it is his 'will I wish to die."

Being asked again, "Have 'you no desire to get well?" After pausing a little, she said, "If I have any desire it is to 'die. If I should live, I should 'be likely to dishonor the cause 'of Christ. If left to myself, I 'certainly should. What is 'there in this world worth living 'for? It now appears to me 'like an empty bubble."

When asked, "Do you feel 'yourself prepared to die?" She answered, "Yes." "Do you have 'that clearness in your views, 'and that comfort which you 'have formerly had?" She answered, "I do; but I wish 'for more light, and greater 'evidence." Some time after this she said, "She had the 'evidence which she desired, 'and her faith was strengthened. The time since I have 'been sick, though my sickness 'has been painful, has been the 'happiest part of my life. Oh, if 'people knew of the comforts of 'religion! if careless sinners

'knew what I have experienced 'since I have been sick, it ap-'pears to me, they could not be 'stupid any longer."

When asked, "How do you 'feel about dying?" She said, "I am willing." Have you no fears? "I do not know that I 'have any." Are you not terri-fied, when you think of being dead, of being no more in this world, of your body being laid in the grave? "These things 'do not terrify me. If my soul 'is well, it is no matter what be-'comes of my body." Are your feelings the same as formerly? "Yes, only livelier." Does God appear lovely to you? "Yes, 'very lovely." Do you feel as if you could be happy with God, and in the holy worship and praise of him with angels and saints? "I think I desire this." After a little pause, she said, "The heart is deceitful above 'all things, and desperately 'wicked, who can know it?" "I 'do not know but I shall finally 'be found a hypocrite and be 'cast off; but if I be, God will 'be glorious and to be praised 'for ever. How is it possible I 'should be deceived, when Jesus 'appears the chiefest among 'ten thousand and altogether 'lovely? If I or any are ever 'saved, it will be all grace, 'grace from the bottom to the 'top stone. Oh, what a dis-'play of God's grace in send-'ing his Son to save such a poor 'wretched creature as I am."

One night, she said, it was not probable she should live to see the light of another morn-ing, and before she died, she wished to take leave of her friends. After talking on many things with her husband, she said, "after I am gone, greater 'duty will devolve on you. Be 'faithful to the children."— "Bring them up in the nurture 'and admonition of the Lord."

To her mother by marriage, she said, "We have lived to-'gether in friendship and peace. 'I must now leave you. Our 'parting will be but for a short 'time. I hope we shall meet 'again in the kingdom of heav-'en." She then took her by the hand, and with a smile on her countenance bid her fare-wel.

After thanking her father by marriage, under whose roof she had lived, for all his kindnesses, she said, "you, my father, are a 'very old man and infirm, and 'cannot live long. If you are 'prepared, it matters but little 'how soon you bid farewel."

To her little son, she said, "I must die and leave you. 'You must be obedient to your 'father and grand-parents. Read 'the bible; and be often on 'your knees in prayer to God. 'I hope God will give you a 'new heart, and enable you to 'pray in faith." Shaking hands with him, very affectionately, she bade him farewel. This was truly an affecting scene. It was the only time in her sick-ness in which she wept. She afterwards said, "It was her 'greatest trial to part with her 'little son."

Her other little children and friends she parted with much in the same way.

To an intimate acquaintance and relation of hers she said, "We have lived together in all 'the vanity and thoughtlessness 'of youth. It has been the will 'of Providence that we should 'be settled in life near each 'other. I must now be separa-

'ted from you by death." She then pressed on her the importance of being prepared to follow her.

A person came in, who was known to disbelieve the Christian religion. She wished to converse with him; and when he had come to her bedside, she said to him, "Don't you believe 'a person must be born again?" He answered, "Some say so." She continued, "But are not 'all mankind by nature enemies 'to God?" Ans. "Yes." "How 'then can they be happy with 'him unless their natures are 'changed?" When he, either to pacify her, or convinced in his mind of the truth, said, "It is 'all true." She conversed with him very solemnly, and with much earnestness. You must die, she said, and "Without 'holiness no one can see the 'Lord;" and pressed on him the importance of immediate preparation for death; observing that such a bed of distress as she was on, was a poor place to prepare for eternity.

The day before she died, she appeared to be raised above this world. She spent all the day in praising God. Several times, in the midst of distressing pains, and a burning fever, she would say, "Grace, it is all grace." Once, when she appeared to be in a sleep, she broke out in singing,

"Before the rosy dawn of day,
"To thee my God I'll sing,"

and then awoke. When she appeared in extreme pain, one who stood by her said in a tone of pity, "Oh, poor creature!" She said, "I am not poor. I 'feel rich in faith."

At several times she appeared to be dying. At one of these times looking calmly on those around her, she repeated with a smile,

"Bless'd Jesus, what delicious fare,
"How sweet thy entertainments are!
"Never did angels taste above,
"Redeeming grace, and dying love.
"Far from my thoughts, vain world, be gone,
"Let my religious hours alone:
"Fain would my eyes, my Saviour see,
"I wait, a visit, Lord, from thee."

When she was interrupted with distress, she said, "I hope 'soon to be in Heaven, uniting 'with holy beings in praising 'God where I shall have no in-'terruption."

She then repeated the 90th Psalm short metre, beginning thus, "Lord what a feeble peice," &c. and with particular emphasis, the last verse,

"They'll waft us sooner o'er,
"This life's tempestuous sea;
"Soon we shall reach the peaceful shore
"Of blest eternity."

When she was at several times apparently dying, she seemed to rejoice. She would often say, "Why is his chariot so long 'in coming?" At the same time she would beg for patience; and intreat others to pray that she might not be left to murmur, but be enabled to honor the religion of Christ in her death.

She said she did not wish to die, to get rid of pain, but to be free from this body of sin, and to be with Christ. She never mentioned her pains but with willingness to bear them, saying, "They are what I deserve."

She frequently asked for prayers with her; but never desired prayers for her recovery, but that she might be conformed to

the will of God. When she was really dying, she was asked, "Is all well with you? Are you dying in peace!" Unable to speak she nodded her head, and soon departed from this life.

Reader, think of her, and learn that you must die. Have you a firm, robust constitution, and has health bloomed on your cheek, and activity marked your steps? The person whose death you now read of, could have claimed these as well as you. Have you an infant offspring in your arms, or children around you looking to your hand for bread, and placing themselves under your protection, or aged parents looking to you to support their declining years, and sweeten the last moments of life? Have you kind friends, whose ardent prayers are put up for your life, health and prosperity? The person, whose death and experiences are here related, had all these. But she is gone. And when the moment registered in the book of divine decrees arrives, no circumstance in life, no plea nor entreaty, will save you from death. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit return unto God who gave it."

Should this relation ever come to the knowledge of any, who are unprepared for death, let it come to them as an alarm from the death bed, and as a message from the grave. Though the subject of this relation should be dead, she yet speaketh. She hath left her testimony in favor of religion, and of the importance of immediate preparation for death. This is the silent, yet forcible language from the grave, "How can you walk on 'the sides of the grave, every moment liable to take a vast leap 'from time into eternity; how 'can you think on your own sinful state; on meeting your God, 'the great judge of quick and 'dead; or the blessedness of the 'heavenly world, and the awful horrors of the damned; 'and remain in your sins, without hope and without God in 'the world? Oh, prepare to meet 'your God." "Watch, for you 'know not at what hour the 'Lord will come."

What happiness must result from virtues like these in death, and how unlike any thing that can arise from the dry speculations of infidel philosophy? In dark and awful annihilation, is the infidel's hope. But the dying Christian, is cheered, and animated, with hopes, and prospects, beyond the grave. Though sickness emaciate his frame, and death bring him down to the dust, and worms destroy his body; yet he hopes through a crucified, arisen, and exalted Lord, one day, to awake to everlasting life, to see God as he is, and to feast on his fulness. This is truly an enviable situation. "Let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like his."

Christian, are you in doubt, and despondency? Does your heart fail you when you think of encountering death, of going to judgment, and existing in the spiritual and eternal world? Are you ready to sink under the weight of sin which daily burdens you, and to cry out with David, "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul?" Be encouraged. If you have ever given your heart to God, he will never forsake you. He will be near "To lift up the hands that

hang down, and to strengthen the feeble knees." As he has comforted others in death, and enabled them to contemplate on eternity with composure; and in the most needy and trying seasons, discovered to them his own glories; so, if you are his, you may expect he will do unto you. "He that soweth in tears, 'shall reap in joy. Blessed are 'the dead which die in the Lord, 'from henceforth: yea saith the 'Spirit, that they may rest from 'their labours; and their works 'do follow them."

From the Christian Observer.

ON 1 PET. IV. 1 and 2.

THE first and second verses of the fourth chapter of the First Epistle of Peter, have ever been considered as presenting peculiar difficulties. The passage is this—"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." The difficulty arises from the expression—"For he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin," to which no interpretation but one, evidently harsh, and therefore unsatisfactory, has, so far as I have observed, been assigned. For the passage has usually been understood of the Christian who, by mortification, watchfulness, and self-denial, causes his flesh or corrupt nature to suffer, crucifying it continually with its affections and lusts; and thus ceases from the deliberate and habitual practice of sin, that he may no longer live the rest of his time, &c. Every one must perceive the forced and unnatural turn of the phrase under this view, however accurate and scriptural the doctrine may be, as it most assuredly is, which is thus elicited. A view of the passage, which to me is new and interesting, was suggested to me lately in a note of so well known a work as *Kusterus de vero usu Verborum Mediorum*. It occurs in the forty-fourth page of the edition of London, 1793. Kuster is observing that verbs of a passive form have frequently a middle signification and mentions κεκλῆσθαι, ἀνεγεγράφθαι, &c. as examples; and the note to which I allude is subjoined in confirmation of the sentiment. The whole of it is this—"Ἐωνῆσθαι *emisse dicunt Attici. Bos Animadv.* p. 40. τῶ προστεθεῖσι αὐτῷ ἐωνῆσθαι, φάσκων, *dictitans pecunia se acquisivisse potestatem, accedendi ad ipsum. Philostrat.* vii. 36. νῦν ἐπικεκρύχθαι τὸ μὴ τάφῳ καλύψαι, *Creontem edixisse mortuum cadaver, ne quis sepulchro tegat. Soph. Antig.* 27. εἰργάσθαι τάδε, *hæc perpetrasse. Ibid.* v. 300. οὐδὲν ἐξαίρετον, οὐδ' ἴδιον πεποίημαι, *Dem. de corona. Hinc forte intelligendus est locus*, 1 *Pet.* iv. 1. ὁ παθὼν ἐν σαρκὶ πέπαυται ἁμαρτίας, *cessare vos fecit a peccatis. Anonym.*"

By the adoption of this hint the whole passage will assume a different form. "He that hath suffered in the flesh" will then refer to Christ instead of to the Christian, as on the usual exposition; and, "hath ceased from sin," will then stand, "hath

made or caused you to cease from sin." The complexion of the verses under this alteration will best appear however by reading them entire.

Χριστου ουν παθοντος υπερ ημων σαρκι, και υμεις την αυτην εννοιαν οπλισασθε, οτι ο παθων εν σαρκι, πεπαυται αμαρτιας εις το μηκετι ανθρωπων επιθυμιαις, αλλα θελημασι θεου τον επιλοιπον εν σαρκι βιωσαι χρονον.

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh, (*i. e.* Christ,) *hath caused you to cease, or made you to cease, or delivered you, from sin*; that *you* no longer should live the rest of *your* time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." For the use of the word παυω, in the sense of causing to cease or desist, authorities sufficient occur even in Scapula. "Παυω, *finem impono, cessare facio seu desistere—reprimo, coerceo, sedo; dicitur et* παυω σε τινος *facio ut desistas ab hac re: ut apud Isocr. in Paneg.* κακεινον της υβρεως επαυσαν. *Xen. Apomn. lib.* 1. των μεν γαρ αλλων επιθυμιων τους συνοντας επαυε, *ab aliis cupiditatibus revocavit.*" The sense of the active voice being thus established, the authority of Kuster appears to warrant us to transfer that sense in the present case to the passive; for it is well known that the preservation of the accurate middle signification is difficult to be traced at times in the purest Greek writers, and is not to be looked for in those of an inferior period. I mention this because it is for the use of the passive voice in a *middle* sense, more than in a directly *active* one that Kuster contends. But if the matter were to be pushed even on this ground, if it would not be too great a refinement, we might observe, that as the Redeemer "purifies *unto himself* a peculiar people zealous of good works," so some similar subordinate idea may be here understood, sufficient for the confirmation of the proposed improvement. Jesus Christ causes the believer to desist from sin *for himself*, for the accomplishment of the design of his sufferings, and the advancement of his glory and grace. But I the less urge this, because it appears to me unnecessary to my cause. If we may then consider πεπαυται αμαρτιας as rightly rendered by, "he hath caused, enabled, or disposed you to desist, or cease, from the practice of sin," there appear no other difficulties in the text that require more than a mere observation. For no one can doubt that ο παθων εν σαρκι may fairly be referred to Jesus Christ, who remembers that they are the very words predicated of him in the former member of the passage, Χριστου ουν παθοντος υπερ ημων σαρκι. The alteration also of "he" and "his," in the second verse of our present translation, into "you" and "your," can only distress the English reader, till he is informed that the Greek construction is indifferent to either rendering εις το μηκετι,—βιωσαι.

I propose, however, these remarks with some diffidence, as the subject of criticism in general, and especially where the sacred Scriptures are concerned, is peculiarly delicate, and, as I am fully aware, that interpretations of words, contrary to the ordinary use of a language, should be admitted only with

extreme caution, and never except in cases, as I think the present one to be, where grammatical authorities on the one hand, and the insufficiency of the existing translation on the other, call for the interference.*

D. W.

From the Christian Observer.

THE complaints which are made against the Bible have been frequently proved to be absurd and false. And it is always true, that it is the disposition of the objector, not the Word of God itself, which is worthy of censure.

No text, perhaps, in the whole Bible, has been more frequently attacked by infidels than that which says, Matthew vii. 7. "Ask, and it shall be given you." They argue that it is not true, because all prayers are not answered. But they should remember, that on this point, as well as on all others, certain conditions are required, without which God will not perform his promise.

It will be my object to shew what things are necessary in the person praying, in order to his receiving the blessings which he desires. As this subject requires a larger field of disquisition than the narrow limits of a paper will admit, it may not be amiss to divide it into two parts, the first of which relates to the *manner*; the second to the *matter* of his prayer.

With respect then to the *manner*, he must pray with a *lively faith*, with a *fervent desire*, with *patience* and *perseverance*, with *humility* and *lowliness*.

1. *A lively faith* in the goodness of God, and a belief that he is able and willing to grant our requests, is the first thing necessary. It is evident, that we cannot with sincerity pray for blessings from God, unless we believe that he is all-powerful and all-gracious. Without this belief our prayers, so far from being a proof of real devotion and sanctity, would only be an indication of a mind deeply tinctured with superstition. But the *faithless* supplicator at the throne of grace is not only guilty of absurdity, but even of rebellion against his Maker. For faith is one of those qualifications which are absolutely required in prayer. Our Saviour's words upon this subject are as plain as possible. Matthew xxi. 22. "All things," says he, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, *believing*, ye shall receive." And we are told by an inspired Apostle that he who prays without faith must not expect to "receive any thing of the Lord." James i. 7. Faith is demanded by the Almighty as a proof of obedience: and we can never suppose, that he would so far encourage disobedience, as to reward those who openly and deliberately violate his commands, at the very time when they approach his divine Ma-

* It may not be improper to notice in this place, for the conveniency of comparison, the interpretation given of the above passage of Scripture by both Beausobre and L'Enfant. "Puis donc que Jesus Christ a souffert pour nous quant a la chair, de votre cote armez vous de cette pensee, que celui qui est mort a la chaire a renoncee au peche en sorte que desormais pendant tout le cours de sa vie mortelle, il vive non selon les passions humaines, mais selon la volonte de Dieu."

jesty in prayer, and beseech him to shower down his blessings upon them.

2. It is also necessary that we pray with *a fervent desire* for the blessings which we request. Indifference is improper and injurious even in the common affairs of life, but lukewarmness in Religion is a most heinous sin against God. If it is a matter of little concern to us, whether or not our prayers are answered; if we do not feel that we stand in real need of the blessings for which we pray; we shall surely not be likely to offer up our devotions with that earnestness, without which they cannot prove acceptable to the Almighty.

3. We must also pray with *patience* and *perseverance*. Whatever may be thought of frequent repetition on other occasions, we may be sure that it is not an abuse or waste of words in prayer. We must not expect to receive every blessing as soon as our prayer is uttered, but we must continue daily to pray for it till we receive it. It was not until the woman of Canaan had repeatedly uttered the same desire, that our Lord granted her requests. And we find the same gracious Saviour making the following application of his parable of the injured widow, and the unjust judge, who would not have done justice to her, had he not been wearied by her importunity. "Shall not God avenge his own elect which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" Luke xviii. 7. After this declaration need we fear that our prayers will be forgotten by God, if we persevere in asking of him those things which he knows in his infinite goodness to be proper for us?

4. We must likewise pray with *humility and lowliness*. Pride is, on all occasions, highly absurd as well as sinful: but we should be more sensible than ever of our own impotence, and of course more humble, when we find ourselves unable to procure any good gift without the assistance of the Almighty. It would be needless and endless to cite passages from the New Testament, which condemn pride in the most unequivocal terms. Let it suffice to remind the man, who, in the very act of devotion, encourages a haughty spirit of the declaration of our Lord, that the Publican, who put up the short but humble prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner," went to his house justified rather than the self-righteous Pharisee: and let him also remember the concluding remark of our Lord on this occasion: "For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Luke xviii. 14. Prayer then, as far as regards *the manner*, must be offered up with a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a sense of our weakness and misery without his grace, with a patient dependence that he will vouchsafe to answer our prayers as far as they are for our own good and his glory, and, lastly, with the most humiliating notions of our depravity and unworthiness.

I am, &c. R. K. E.

Letter from a Brother to a Sister.

My dear M——,

I HAVE heretofore written to you on the importance of

temporal concerns, I am now about to write you on a subject, compared with which, those I have mentioned are trifles and without importance. The subject is one which has not been thought beneath the notice of men, of angels and of God.—This subject is the destruction of trifling and sinful propensities in the hearts of men; the restoration of a holy principle to the soul, and the translation of the sinner from a state of sin and spiritual death, to a state of holiness, righteousness and spiritual life, through the merits and intercession of a crucified Saviour. All mankind, my dear M—,by practically consenting to the disobedience of our first parents, and by innumerable actual transgressions have brought upon themselves the righteous penalty of God's holy law; and in consequence of that, without an interest in Christ, must for ever perish. He by his suffering on the earth laid a foundation for all sinners to be saved who will come unto him by repentance of sins, and by an acceptance of him, as abundantly willing and sufficient to save them, and after all their prayers, tears and sorrows by giving all the glory, if they are saved, to him who died for them.

You well know, dear M. that you are a sinner of the description that I have mentioned, and that God alone is able to save, and that he will not save you, unless you repent and are heartily sorry for your sins. You likewise know that youth is infinitely the best time to prepare for eternity. Do not imagine (as many have done, and by that means, have no doubt gone down to the regions of sorrow and despair) that by embracing religion, you at once shut yourself out from all the pleasures and enjoyments naturally and exclusively attached to youth; for let me tell you, my dear, nothing was ever so false and erroneous. I ask, who are the best judges of their happiness? Are not they who have been in both situations? If so let me tell you that I have heard religious youth say, of themselves, I can say since I have maintained a hope of myself, I have enjoyed more happiness from religion than I ever did from any worldly thing, and not only so, every innocent amusement (and others you would not wish to enjoy) has been sweetened by religion.

The pleasure of such amusements is by no means lessened, and the happiness which is derived from the contemplation of God and a happy future state is great and lasting. But the pleasure to be received from the company and conversation of religious friends, on religious subjects is beyond all comparison superior to that which any one can receive from the company of one of a different character. But what avails all this, when compared with the great object in view?

This life is of short duration; every hour and every day you live, you are one hour or one day nearer death and so much nearer the final judgment. A vast proportion of those that are ever saved, are converted when young; and of those who pass the time of youth without religion, there is great danger that in the future world most of them will lift up their eyes being in torment. If you pass over this

warning in the providence of God, there is great danger that you will finally be lost for ever. You have had a surprising and wonderful deliverance from your sickness. Let me ask you (and I beseech you through the mercy of God to ask yourself the question with solemnity) where would you have been now, had God in that sickness taken you out of the world? Was you prepared to die? Let me tell you that nothing but a change of heart will be sufficient. While over your sick bed I often thought that you were soon to sink into the eternal world. Oh, I tremble to think what a sentence you would have received from your judge. You have now learned that a sick bed is a bad time to prepare for death. Although I loved you as much as a brother could love a sister, and sorrowed to part with you as much, yet apprehensions about your future condition were the greatest of my concerns; though I loved your body, I loved your soul more; though I sorrowed to part with you here, yet I sorrowed more to part with you for eternity. Believing, as I cannot but believe, that you was unprepared to die, I praise my God that he did not take you hence. This ought to be a subject of endless praise to God with you. Begin now, if you have not already begun, to make religion the business of your life. Now pray to God, and praise him. If you wish to enquire what shall I do to be saved, apply to the scriptures. Your parents will direct you. I beseech you that when I return I may not only have in you a sister, but a religious friend. From your sincere Brother. W.

From the Christian Observer.

ON 1 TIM. vi. 10.

IF the following remarks are thought to be deserving a place in the Christian Observer, the insertion of them in that valuable publication will oblige the writer.

There are few subjects on which pious Christians and learned critics are so much agreed, as in acknowledging the superiority of our present authorized version of the scriptures, to every other attempt which has been made to translate them into the English language. But, notwithstanding this concurrence of sentiment, there are perhaps none who consider the subject closely, that do not find particular passages in our translation, which they think might be improved by a different rendering.

There is one passage which has often appeared to me to require correction, especially as it asserts what I apprehend cannot, according to the common acceptation of the words, be supported, either as a universal or a general truth. The passage to which I allude, is in the 1st Epistle to Timothy, vi. 10. where the apostle is made to say, "the 'love of money is the root of all 'evil." I am aware, that it is a frequent practice to express what is general by words of universal import; but this, as is already intimated, does not appear to apply to the present case: for it will, I suppose, be generally allowed, that pride and its various consequences, as they effect both public and private life, are productive of more evil and misery than avarice: and when to these we add the evils

which result from the inordinate indulgence of various other passions of the human mind, it is difficult to conceive, that the apostle intended to say what his translators make him say; and which I think a close examination of the original will not be found to require. His words are, "Ριζα γαρ παντων των κακων εστι η φιλαργυρια;" literally, "the love of money is the root of all the evils." Now a question arises, What evils? Are we necessarily to suppose, that the apostle meant all the evils in the world? or is it not a more natural and proper construction of the words, to suppose, that he meant the evils which he had just enumerated; for this expression immediately follows these words: "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition:" then he adds, "for the 'love of money is the root of all the (or these evils.") Had our translators used as much liberty in this case, as they have done in others, they might have fixed the sense by the use of the word *these*, and making evil plural, as it is in the Greek, so as to have rendered the apostle's expression free from that difficulty which now attends it. There is a parallel case in Mark iv. 11. where the same Greek article, though in a different case, is used; and the translators, to render the sense perspicuous, have used the word *these*, which they put in italics, to show that it is not strictly consistent with the original.

I submit this criticism to the consideration of the readers of the Christian Observer; and it is done with the greater diffidence, as no translator or commentator that I have consulted, gives the words of the apostle the meaning which I have attached to them. I do not, however, claim the originality of the criticism, it having been communicated to me many years ago by a learned friend.

It is possible to give an explication of this passage, which may in a great measure justify the sense of our translators; but if what is here offered be, as I apprehend it is, justifiable on the principles of sound criticism, it makes the sense so easy and perspicuous, as to render explication unnecessary.

H. T.

Further Accounts of the Sales and Profits of the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine.

Balance due from Subscribers to Hudson & Goodwin, for the first four volumes and first half of the fifth volume, as per statement May 14, 1805.	£ 1390. 74
Deduct, error in the above Balance, - - -	1.
Balance, - - - - - - - - - -	1389. 74
Since paid by Subscribers, - - - - -	672. 97
Due from Subscribers to Hudson & Goodwin on the first four volumes and first half of fifth volume,	716. 77

The sum of 672 dollars and 97 Cents mentioned above as paid by Subscribers to Hudson & Goodwin, was paid by them September 4th, 1806, to Rev. Abel Flint, appointed by the Trustees of the Missionary Society of Connecticut to receive the same, and by him paid to Treasurer of the Society, as appears by the Treasurer's receipt as follows :

NO. 1864. *Hartford, September* 4. 1806.

Received from Rev. Abel Flint six hundred and seventy two Dollars 97 Cents, being avails of Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, from Hudson and Goodwin, for which I am accountable as Treasurer to the Missionary Society, having given a duplicate of this receipt therefor. A. KINGSBURY.

Whole amount of Money received by the Treasurer of the Missionary Society of Connecticut, as avails of the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine $ 7353 and 29 Cents.

Missionary Society of Connecticut.

AT the stated Meeting of the Trustees of the Missionary Society of Connecticut, September 3, 1806. The Honorable John Treadwell was elected Chairman and the Rev. Abel Flint, Secretary of the Board of Trustees for the year ensuing. At the same time the following Committees were chosen for the year.

Committee of Accounts. Hon. Jonathan Brace and Rev. Messrs. Nathan Perkins and Abel Flint.

Committee of Missions. Hon. Jonathan Brace, and Rev. Mess. Cyprian Strong, Elijah Parsons, Nathan Perkins, Samuel Nott, and Abel Flint.

Fund Committee, to superintend the Funds of the Society. Hon. John Treadwell, Hon. Roger Newberry, Hon. Jonathan Brace, and Andrew Kingsbury Esqrs.

Book Committee, Hon. Jonathan Brace, and Rev. Messrs. Nathan Perkins and Abel Flint.

The Rev. Nathan Strong resigned his office as a Trustee, and the Rev. Samuel J. Mills was elected in his place.

Donations to the Missionary Society of Connecticut.

Sept. 1.	A Lady from Windham, - - - - - - -	$	3 00
4.	Trustees of Missionary Society of Connecticut being avails of Magazines,		672 97
13.	Collected in New settlements by Rev. Calvin Ingals,		22 08
17.	Deacon Aaron Moses, Canton, - - - - - -		3 50
29.	A Female Friend of Missions, - - - - - -		2 00
		$	703. 55